

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm

June 20, 2007

This is Governor Jennifer Granholm.

Steve Ballmer, the CEO of Microsoft, was in Michigan last week to talk to the Detroit Economic Club. When the head of one of the most successful companies in the world talks, I think we should all listen. And last week, Steve shared an important message for leaders in government and in the private sector about Michigan's future.

For Steve, the future is about one thing: innovation, innovation, innovation. I could not agree more.

Steve observed that investing in innovation and spending more on those investments in the face of economic challenges – whether you're a business or the government – is tough to do, and it's a hard sell. But it is a key – perhaps *the* key – to future success.

Our experience in Michigan over the past five years has shown that to be true. All of our brightest spots – our greatest successes – involve innovation.

In Ann Arbor, Google is revolutionizing online advertising and how we use the Internet. And other technology company, Adaptive Materials, is producing portable fuel cells for the U.S. military.

In Dundee Michigan, the Global Engine Manufacturing Alliance, which is a joint venture between Chrysler, Hyundai and Mitsubishi, they're using leading-edge technology to create the next generation of cost-efficient engines.

Near Saginaw, Hemlock Semiconductor has become the nation's leading supplier of polycrystalline silicon, which is used to manufacture solar panels.

In Auburn Hills and in Greenville, United Solar Ovonic is the world's largest manufacturer of "thin film" solar panels – all technology based.

Our 21st Century Jobs Plan is focused on sectors of the economy that are fueled by innovation, and that create jobs. And we have already awarded funding to 85 companies across the state – hiring people, growing in Michigan, choosing to come to Michigan.

Next month, governors from around the country will be gathering in Traverse City for the 2007 National Governors Association annual meeting. And our theme this year is *Innovation America*. I'll be highlighting all of the things we're doing in Michigan to foster innovation, from working to attracting cutting-edge industries like alternative energy, to raising our high school curriculum standards and working to make college affordable and accessible for all of our citizens.

The signs are all around us – when Michigan innovates, it pays off. We're creating jobs, growing our economy, and taking the first steps towards a vibrant, diversified future. We have so many amazing opportunities, and these are positive signs.

But, as Steve Ballmer knows from his experience at Microsoft, we need to invest in our people and continue to focus on innovation if we want to thrive – and that's especially true in challenging economic times.

Thanks for listening and I'll talk to you next week.